

Michigan PLANNER

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Historic Preservation: A Vital Component of Community Planning

Using Michigan enabling legislation as an example (Municipal Planning Act, PA 285 of 1931), the act states that when a planning commission is formed, it shall make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, and defines the contents of the plan. "The plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive matter... (shall include)

Minimal attention has been given to historic preservation plans by historic preservationists or by urban and regional planners in most parts of the United States. According to Bradford White and Richard Roddewig (1994) in their Planning Advisory Service Bulletin No. 450, two states mandate a preservation element in the local comprehensive land use or master plan, while 12 states openly encourage a plan

as an optional element in the comprehensive plan. Why are these seemingly ignored by the majority of governments? It appears that many historic preservationists have not considered a historic preservation plan as necessary, while traditional planners have not viewed historic

resources as a significant planning element.

Additional enabling legislation exists in Michigan to create historic district ordinances (Local Historic Districts Act, PA - 169 of 1970). Historic district



The Judge Wilson House in one of downtown Ann Arbor's established historic districts is a stellar example of Greek Revival architecture

among other things, the general location, character, and extent of streets, viaducts, subways, bridges, waterways, floodplains, waterfronts, boulevards, parkways, playgrounds, and open space..." and other urban elements. Nowhere does this Municipal Planning Act mention historic resources.

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The Michigan Planner serves as a medium for the exchange of ideas and information for the planning community in the state of Michigan. The Michigan Planner is programmed by the Michigan Planner Committee of the Society, which is comprised of Michelle Aniol, Bob Beaugrand, AICP, Judy Bocklage, AICP, Megan Gibbs, AICP, Douglas Hedges, Leah Hutko, AICP, Mark Miller, AICP/PCP, Rodney Nannery, AICP, Dr. Rirt Norgaard, and Mark Taormina, AICP/PCP.

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American
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Leadership Perspectives

President's Message



Tony Kulick
Michigan Society of Planning
President

As I sit writing this article, I am thinking about all the good things that happened in 2002. In spite of the fact the state and national economies are weak and the governor just slashed revenue sharing to local communities, the Michigan Society of Planning is in a stronger and more prestigious position than we were a year ago. We have become an organization that members of both houses of the state legislature look to for advice on land use and planning issues that face Michigan. MSP held strategic meetings with boards of directors and executive directors from many organizations throughout the state in 2002, and these meetings will continue to bear fruit in years to come as we strive to influence change in Lansing.

Speaking of change in Lansing, we will have a new governor, 50 House freshmen, and 27 Senate freshmen who will be looking to MSP as a resource on land use issues. The governor and many of the new representatives and senators campaigned on a platform of smart growth and the need to slow down suburban sprawl. Board members Jim Tischler and John Sych are veterans that helped MSP bring about the changes in planning enabling laws in

2001 to help us meet the challenges of the 22nd century. Their experience and leadership will be critical as we strive to move Michigan from the bottom of the Sierra Club's list of states with poor land use practices to a model that other states can look to.

But the Michigan Society of Planning is only as strong as our members: it was your phone calls to our legislators in 2001 that demonstrated the strength of our 5,000 members. When our elected officials start to get phone calls from their constituents they take notice and make positive changes that benefit all of us.

MSP's affiliation with the American Planning Association (APA) has also been a valuable resource that the board used to learn the ropes of legislative advocacy. APA has provided guidance based on its experiences of promoting legislative changes throughout the country, and has sent advisors from both the Chicago and Washington D.C. national offices to help the board become a more effective advocate.

And the Society will be sponsoring our annual Legislative Assembly in Lansing on February 4. This will provide an opportunity for you and the board to inform our newly elected officials the direction we want the state to take in this legislative session. The more members we can get to attend this event, the stronger MSP will be perceived in Lansing. Watch the Michigan Planner for details about this event.

Our membership has maintained constant in the face of a weak economy. This is a tribute to the educational services, legislative advocacy, and the planning principals the organization promotes. You and your communities have seen the

value of belonging to the Society and have maintained your membership, attended training sessions and worked to make your communities better places to live, work, and raise families. Unique opportunities and challenges will be presented in 2003 for our organization and its members. We will all have to roll up our sleeves this year to see our communities through these hard times. Make sure you regularly check the MSP Website at www.planningmi.org and read your Michigan Planner magazine to stay connected and learn how you can be involved in making Michigan better.

Your board will continue to forge partnerships with organizations throughout the state so we can become stronger advocates for change in Lansing. The board will also continue to watch the bottom line to make sure that MSP remains fiscally solvent in these difficult times.

Annual Conference Call for Sessions

Plans are underway for the 2003 Annual Conference which will be held at the Grand Traverse Resort from October 15-18.

If you would like to speak at this conference, please contact the Michigan Society of Planning for a session proposal form, or visit our website: www.planningmi.org.

The proposal forms are evaluated for overall quality; well-defined focus; relevance to current planning issues; practical application of material; application to the audience; and transferability of subject.

Session proposal forms must be received by February 14, 2003.

Community on the Rise

Plan Focuses on Rural Preservation

The Bridgewater Township Master Plan, prepared by Birchler Arroyo Associates, Inc., was awarded two planning honors this year: the MSP Outstanding Planning Project for a Plan, the APA Award for Excellence, Small Town and Rural Planning Division.

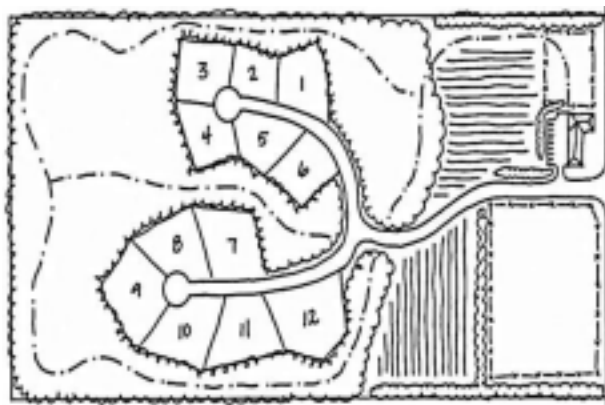
Bridgewater Township is located in Washtenaw County and is defined by its agricultural activity. With 71 percent of the township's land area comprising active agricultural uses, the master plan establishes a land use and thoroughfare plan that accommodates future growth while supporting stable agricultural activity, maintaining the community's rural character, and preserving natural features and open spaces.

Agricultural preservation is an important issue throughout many areas of Washtenaw County. Bridgewater Township's master plan builds upon a foundation established by the Washtenaw County Metropolitan Planning Commission for long-term preservation of agriculture and natural features within the county by identifying prime farmland and agricultural resources, important open spaces, and valuable natural features. Tools and techniques for achieving their preservation goals were recommended, in addition to recommendations that the township work with other local planning groups to develop a regional plan that promotes the agricultural character of the region.

Agriculture Defines the Community

Throughout the planning process, the planning commission made significant efforts to gain input and

support from township residents and property owners, including the distribution of a survey, hosting of a visioning session, and by posting draft plan text and maps on the Internet. The result is a land use plan that provides a diverse mix of residential, community commercial, and light industrial uses. The theme woven throughout the plan is one that prescribes all future development



The Bridgewater Township master plan emphasizes cluster development to preserve natural resources.

to be in keeping with the area's rural character and in harmony with existing natural features.

One key to achieving rural preservation was the recommendation for clustering of new residential development. Using GIS software to graphically illustrate the importance of clustering to their preservation goal, a build-out analysis was performed. The result of the analysis was a greater emphasis on the pattern/form of residential development, in addition to density.

The master plan focuses on other recommendations for maintaining and enhancing Bridgewater's agricultural character in addition to clustering. These recommendations include the preservation and reuse of historic buildings, use of native species in landscaping design,

development of design guidelines for nonresidential uses, preservation of important viewsheds, and reduction of light transmission into the night sky.

Zoning ordinance amendments will implement the goals of the master plan. These ordinance amendments will incorporate standards for open space placement, grant density bonuses to encourage use of the clustering options, and give the development community a way to reduce development costs and provide open space, which becomes a marketing asset.

Public Involvement/ Public Input

Throughout the master plan process township residents and property owners were encouraged and provided outlets to participate in the development and implementation of the plan. Broad outreach was conducted during the planning process, including ongoing notifications in local newspapers, township newsletter, and mailings; the development of a planning Website; the distribution of a community survey to all households and property owners; and by hosting a visioning session.

The planning Website proved to be a valuable tool to keep residents informed of the progress and direction of the plan. Individual chapters were available online to the public throughout the process. In addition, residents were able to ask questions and provide valuable input via e-mail. This innovative approach facilitated public involvement and resulted in a master plan that truly reflects the vision and goals of the community.

Compiled by Michelle Aniol, associate planner, McKenna Associates, Inc.

Legislative Update

92nd Legislature will Consider Land Use a Priority

The 2002 Michigan elections were the most exciting in perhaps 12 years due primarily to term limits. Most notable, of course, is the election of Jennifer Granholm, who will be the state's first female governor. Her 51 percent to 47 percent victory margin, though slimmer than projected, gives Democrats a hold on the executive branch for the first time in a dozen years. Former Assistant Wayne County Prosecutor Mike Cox is Michigan's new attorney general, reclaiming that office for the Republicans for the first time in a half-century. The election, decided by only 5,200 votes, was also the closest statewide race in 50 years. Meanwhile, Terri Lynn Land, the former Kent County clerk, cruised to victory for secretary of state.

Michigan Senate and House of Representatives

Kelly Cauthorne, the Society's legislative advisor in Lansing, indicated that Republicans continued their 20-year domination of the state Senate, albeit with a slimmer margin. Republicans now enjoy a 22-16 advantage in the 92nd Michigan Senate, down one seat from their previous majority. Sen. Ken Sikke ma (R-Grand Rapids) was easily re-elected and named the new Senate majority leader by his colleagues. Sen. Bev Hamnerstrom (R-Temperance) will serve as majority floor leader while the Democrat selected Sen. Bob Emerson (D-Flint) and Sen.-elect Mark Schauer as minority leader and minority floor leader, respectively.



Over two-thirds of the members of the state Senate will be freshman, with 28 of 38 members leaving due to term limits or election to higher office. However, the Senate will be more seasoned than the House since only one incoming member, Sen. Bill Hardiman, does not have previous state legislative experience. Sen. Patty Birkholz has been selected to chair the Senate Natural Resources & Environment Committee, which will likely have jurisdiction over land use issues. Sen. Birkholz may also sit on the Appropriations Committee, which for the first time, will be chaired by a woman, Sen. Shirley Johnson (R-Royal Oak).

The GOP's stunning pick-up of five seats in the House was the biggest surprise of election 2002. Few expected the GOP to take 63 of 110 House seats for the biggest Republican margin since the Eisenhower years.

In leadership elections Rep. Rick Johnson (R-LeRoy) was re-elected as speaker to preside over a chamber with nearly 60 new faces, more than half of the 110 members. Rep. Randy Richardville (R-Monroe) was elected majority floor leader with Rep. Jerry Kooiman and Rep. Bill Huizenga, both of Western Michigan, named as assistant majority floor leaders. On the Democratic side of the aisle former Sen. Dianne Byrum (D-Onadaga), who is returning to the House, was elected minority leader and Rep. Mary Waters (D-Detroit) was named minority floor leader.

House Speaker Rick Johnson has indicated early on that he will

increase the Republican majorities on House committees to reflect the increased Republican strength in the House at large. This is most likely good news for social conservatives and business interests. On the other hand, the Democrats will enjoy more negotiating leverage on legislation than they do currently because the party now controls at least one branch of government – the executive branch – and Republicans do not have sufficient majorities in either House to override a gubernatorial veto. We fully expect Rep. Ruth Johnson (R-Holly) to continue to chair the House Land Use & Environment Committee, which will likely have jurisdiction over most land use issues.

General Legislative Outlook for 2003

Clearly the anticipated \$1.8 billion state general fund deficit for fiscal year 2003-04 and the proposed solutions will dominate the legislative agenda deep into the summer of 2003. During a December 4 meeting of land use organizations, then Gov.-elect Jennifer Granholm clearly informed all of us that state budget conditions were priority one, and new legislative proposals during 2003 must be budget neutral. Promising, however, were the Gov.-elect Granholm's additional comments which supported the advancement of new Transfer of Development Rights legislation, her Fix it First policy on infrastructure, and finding new ways of inserting a more regional viewpoint to land use decisions.

Gov.-elect Granholm pledged during her campaign to name a blue ribbon/bi-partisan commission to study land use issues. This pledge was confirmed during the December meeting of land

2003 MSP Legislative Conference

Tuesday, February 4, 2003

Radisson Hotel and Lansing Center, Downtown Lansing

use organizations, and MSP involvement is being sought. As the new Legislature takes hold in 2003 look for manufactured housing reform and the relationship of school construction to local zoning to remain hot topics.

As reported at the 2002 MSP annual conference, a trend in several legislative races this past year showed both republicans and democrats citing land use as the number one issue facing their respective districts. Races such as those of Rep. Sue Tabor (R-Grand Ledge) and Rep.-elect Joe Humene (R-Fowlerville) merit attention. In addition, Rep.-elect Howard Walker (R-Traverse City), a land surveyor by trade, credited his upset primary victory to his championing of land as the major economic and quality of life issue in his region. As land use continues its rise among the top issues facing Michigan, it is clear that strong relationships between the planning community and our legislators are even more important than ever before. Take the time to introduce yourself to your legislator and begin dialogue on the issues of land use and the role of community planning. Because of term limits, Michigan is greatly lacking long-term legislative experience in Lansing. Coupled with the "early out" program for state employees, Michigan and its elected leaders will need to find expertise outside of the capitol. Make 2003 the year you become a legislative advocate for smart growth in Michigan.

For additional legislative information contact David Downey, Michigan Society of Planning executive director, at (248) 553-7526

Register Now!

The Michigan Society of Planning's Annual Legislative Conference begins this year with a special members-only luncheon, to be followed by an exciting program highlighting state budget issues and an opportunity to meet the new legislators. Sen.-elect Patty Birkholz and Rep. Ruth Johnson, the two most prominent legislators in the land use arena, will discuss the land use priorities in Michigan's 92nd Legislature. Following lunch, MSP delegates will join other associations' delegates to learn how the state revenue picture will effect local government and private industry. Hear what Gov.-elect Granholm expects to do in her administration. A special reception will follow the day's programming.

EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN

Agenda

- 10:30 a.m. - Registration at Radisson Hotel
- 11:00 a.m. - MSP Luncheon and Keynote Panel Discussion
- 12:45 p.m. - Walk to Lansing Center
- 1:00 p.m. - State Budget Forum: Hard Choices Ahead
- 1:30 p.m. - Response to Today's Budget Reality
- 2:30 p.m. - Refreshment Break
- 3:00 p.m. - Winners & Losers: Campaign Strategies that Worked
- 3:45 p.m. - Plans of the New Administration
- 4:15 p.m. - Meet the New Legislators
- 5:00 p.m. - Legislative Reception

REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____

Municipality or _____

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Billing _____

Address _____

City, State _____

ZIP _____

E-mail Address _____

(confirmations will be sent to e-mail address only)

Registration Fee:

\$110 Regular

\$125 after January 24th

Amount enclosed \$ _____

non MSP members add \$20

Payment Method:

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Historic Preservation: A Vital Component of Community Planning

overlay zoning, which is designed to protect a municipality's historic resources, is becoming more widespread; therefore plans should be formulated to support land regulation inherent in a historic district amendment. When applied, they usually focus on downtown commercial blocks or significant residential areas, early developed industrial sites, or other parts of the community deemed worthy of special protection. The Michigan ordinance gives local historic district commissions broad powers to regulate new development, to approve or deny remodeling of the exterior of existing historic structure, and to challenge proposed demolition of buildings or features in the overlay zone. There is no provision for a zoning board of appeals in the historic district. Consequently local citizens must take their grievances directly to circuit court or to a state historic preservation review board composed of appointed officials who have recognized knowledge about historic resources and are sympathetic toward them.

The overlay historic ordinance is prepared with meticulous attention to building surveys which emphasize architectural integrity. Each building may be photographed, its individual history researched, and the historic context of the area described by local historians. The preparation of this work takes a significant amount of time by individuals with the capability to perform the task. During public hearings, adoption is often contested since the implementation may seem drastic to some private property owners who own properties included in the proposed historic district.

Does the labor performed to

achieve this document constitute a "plan?" Not all historic preservationists view plans like urban and regional planners. The latter think about forecasts; goals, objectives, and strategies; carrying capacity of the urban infrastructure; the physical environment; various implementation techniques; and fiscal impacts and capital improvement plans. Seldom do they consider the historic resources of the community unless it is of major significance or of local economic importance. Conversely, many local historic preservationists seem oblivious to planning elements which they deem external to the focus of their concerns, i.e., saving old buildings.

Planning commissioners should review their master plans to determine if historic resources are recognized as a component of their plan. They should meet and talk to local citizens who are interested in local history. Further discussions should occur with the municipality's attorney to assess the best means of conducting historic preservation planning and a historic district ordinance. Is the historic survey that is necessary to prepare the overlay district adequate to defend controversial decisions by the historic



An example of a historic district map.

district commissioners? If not, the next decision to be addressed is what form the plan should take. Should the historic plan be a stand-alone plan or should it be part of the comprehensive plan? What is the content of the plan? Who should prepare the plan?

The American Planning Association published White and Roddewig's monograph, Planning Advisory Service Bulletin No. 450, "Preparing a Historic Preservation Plan." It describes an excellent outline for the historic preservation plan and should be considered as a model for local preservation planning. Bulletin No. 450 is outlined below.

1. Statement of the goals of preservation in the community, and the purpose of the preservation plan
2. Definitions of the historic character of the state, region, community, or neighborhood
3. Summary of past and current efforts to preserve the community's or neighborhood's character
4. A survey of historic resources in the community or neighborhood, or a definition of the type of survey that should be conducted in communities that have not yet completed a survey
5. Explanation of the legal basis for protection of historic resources in the state and community
6. Statement of the relationship between historic preservation and other local land use and growth management authority, such as the zoning ordinance
7. Statement of the public sector's responsibilities toward city-owned historic resources, such as public buildings, parks, streets, etc., and for ensuring that public actions do not adversely affect historic resources
8. Statement of incentives that are, or

(continued from page 1)

should be, available to assist in the preservation of the community's historic resources

9. Statement of the relationship between historic preservation and the community's educational system and program

10. A precise statement of goals and

image of the community, establish the basis for citizens' "comfort levels" or sense of place, and become the foundation for economic redevelopment. The mere fact that this group of resources exists, they cannot be replaced, and they have the potential to revitalize small, medium, and large communities should be

ample justification for their inclusion in the master plan. It is therefore recommended that statewide planning enabling legislation be amended, if necessary, to include historic resources as part of comprehensive plans, and consequently, to do more than encourage the awareness of those who produce plans.

It is further recommended that local planning commissioners conduct visioning sessions and charters which focus on the future of their municipality's historic areas. Planners trained to create urban plans should take the initiative to form working sessions with those citizens who have an understanding of the significance of local history.

This grouping of individuals should contact the State Historic Preservation Office in the capital city to seek professional input. By combining their efforts the community will incorporate its historic heritage into the document guiding the future of where they live, work, and play. This will provide a bridge from the past to the future and retain the "comfort level" of the local residents. It will also strengthen the legal base for historic district ordinances.

Robert Ward, Ph.D., professor of Urban and Regional Planning at Eastern Michigan University.



Ypsilanti's historic Depot Town utilizes Downtown Development Authority funds in its preservation efforts

policies, including a specific agenda for future action to accomplish those goals"

Historic preservation plans should be treated in the comprehensive plan as a planning element such as housing, transportation, the environment and natural resources, land use, and other components. Such plans should be integrated so local officials who make decisions are clearly aware of the interaction between all planning elements, including historic areas.

Historic resources provide the quality of life that is often taken for granted by members of the community. Frequently, these resources define the

Insider News

MSP Board Adopts Implementation Guidelines, Phase I Policy Guides

At the November retreat, the Michigan Society of Planning's board of directors approved the implementation guidelines for the new planning and zoning laws that were passed in 2001. The guidelines may now be used by communities to implement the new planning laws locally. These implementation guidelines represent the Society's recommended approach to fulfilling community obligations under the new planning laws.

The Michigan Society of Planning's Law Committee deserves a special thank you for developing the guidelines, which address those areas where the new laws are silent. Given the complexity of the changes to the laws, and interpretive nature of those changes, the implementation guidelines help clarify planning and zoning procedures. As you begin to utilize these recommendations, your ongoing feedback will help us further refine best practices for the community planning industry in Michigan.

The MSP board of directors also adopted the Society's first set of policy guides covering smart growth, agriculture land preservation, and housing. Dedicated members of the Government Relations Committee have now provided the Society, and community planning in Michigan, with the tools needed to position ourselves as the leaders of planning in Michigan. Download your copies at our Website: www.planningmi.org/resources.

Planning Basics

Michigan's Certified Local Government Program

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 was amended in 1980 to provide for a federal-state-local preservation partnership. Grants were made available from the National Park Service through the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO) for Certified Local Governments (CLGs) to initiate and support historic preservation activities at the local level. Since then, 16 Michigan local governments have become CLGs including:

Alegan, Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Canton Township, Detroit, East Lansing, Farmington Hills, Grand Rapids, Holland, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Monroe, Saline, Washtenaw County, and Ypsilanti

Any municipality can become a CLG: a county, a township, a large city or small village, or a town. By meeting a few simple but important standards, a community may receive financial aid and technical assistance that will help it develop a historic preservation program to enhance and promote historic neighborhoods and commercial districts. An active CLG program can become an important planning vehicle for community development by identifying specific preservation projects and applying for grants to carry out the projects. The SHPO provides guidance for all units of government to initiate and develop such programs.

The Benefits of Becoming a CLG

Becoming a CLG makes a community eligible to apply for subgrants available only to CLG communities. At least 10 percent of the annual Historic Preservation Fund grant made to Michigan under the National Historic Preservation Act must be distributed to the CLGs. Becoming a

CLG ensures that historic preservation issues are understood and addressed at the local level and are integrated into the local planning and decision-making process at the earliest possible opportunity. Becoming a CLG can expand a local unit's participation in the historic preservation program through the national register nomination process and, with qualified staff, other programs such as review of federal undertakings for impact on historic resources under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Participation in the CLG Program promotes a positive image for the community by being a demonstration of commitment on the part of local officials to work with the state and federal government to preserve historic resources.

Certification and Requirements

To qualify for certification, a local unit of government must have adopted a local historic preservation ordinance that complies with Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act, PA 169 of 1970, as amended, and meets the guidelines set forth in the CLG Manual. Once certified, a CLG

- is required to maintain an ongoing system for the survey and inventory of historic resources;
- must implement four-year historic preservation goals developed for the community;
- is required to provide for adequate public participation in the local historic preservation program;
- may participate in the process of nominating historic properties to the National Register of Historic Places; and

- will be monitored every four years to ensure that all responsibilities are being met.

How to Become a Certified Local Government

The Certified Local Government Program in Michigan, a manual that outlines the process for requesting certification, can be forwarded upon request. Applications for certification may be submitted to the SHPO at any time during the year. The SHPO reviews the application and the National Park Service approves final certification.

Grants and Projects

Grants are awarded annually on a competitive basis. All grants must be matched 40 percent with local funds or donations and are available on a reimbursement basis only. Grants typically range from \$5,000 to \$30,000. Grant activities can include:

- Conducting a survey of historic resources;
- Preparing nominations to the National Register of Historic Places for buildings, sites, structures, objects, and districts in the community;
- Developing design guidelines for local historic districts; administering a local historic district ordinance;
- Preparing a local preservation plan for managing historic resources;
- Preparing a feasibility study for restoration of a historic structure;
- Physical restoration of national register-listed properties; or
- Educating the community on historic preservation through the publication of brochures, a speaker's bureau, or the development of a Web site.

Education Update

MSP Offers New GIS Workshop

Project activities must have measurable results. The State Historic Preservation Office welcomes innovative proposals that promote historic preservation. The intent of the CLG grant program is to augment rather than replace existing local financial commitment to historic preservation activities.

The following projects were funded with CLG grants. They helped to identify, promote, and enhance the communities' historic resources, as well as bolster economic development and tourism in three Michigan CLGs.

- Washtenaw County surveyed 2,494 acres of farmland as part of an intensive-level survey of German settlements in western Washtenaw County.

- The city of Alean undertook several education projects with three separate CLG grants. The city published a brochure for property owners in historic districts on how to comply with the historic district ordinance. A second brochure featured a descriptive inventory of Alean's historic resources. In addition, the city developed a historic preservation Website, which contains information to assist property owners in historic districts and can be viewed at www.historicalelan.org.

- The city of Holland installed footings, replaced rotted wood, and reattached the kitchen addition of the Thomas and Anna Morrissey House, which was built in 1871 and sheltered early Dutch immigrants.

For more information, contact the State Historic Preservation Office, Michigan Historical Center, Box 30740, 702 West Kalamazoo St., Lansing, Michigan 48909-8240, (517) 373-1630 or e-mail at preservation@michigan.gov.

The Michigan Society of Planning will be utilizing the expertise and facilities of the Land Information Access Association in Traverse City to present a brand new workshop in the application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS). This workshop will improve local land use decisions, and everyone involved in community planning and zoning processes, including local appointed and elected officials, should attend. This one-day course includes instruction and takes a hands-on approach to GIS.

- Introduction to Geographic Information Systems

You will learn why geographic coordinate systems matter, how paper maps are converted to computer formats, what levels of accuracy are useful, and how GIS operations create specialized maps.

- Understanding GIS Possibilities and Limitations

During this hands-on session you will work with a desktop GIS application to learn how geographic analyses are done. You will learn how to associate databases with mapped features, and how a GIS operator produces a properly scaled paper display map.

- Emerging Technologies for Informed Land Use Decisions

This session will address real-world examples of community planning and zoning decisions and the ways local governments use GIS to evaluate the potential impacts of development decisions. We will also consider the ways recent advances in technology, such as Internet access, can improve your access to information, reduce GIS costs, and expand public access to relevant information. This workshop costs \$150 per participant and includes course handouts. Lunch is on your own.

The Traverse City area has become a hotbed for innovative planning and cutting edge solutions to preserve the community's assets. This will prove be an excellent opportunity to immerse yourself in the successful efforts of one community's planning endeavors.

If you will be traveling to Traverse City for this workshop, and are interested in learning more about the area, Russ Soyring, planning director for Traverse City and board member for the Michigan Society of Planning, is offering a welcoming tour for attendees who travel to Traverse City the evening before the workshops.

In addition, workshop attendees will receive a special reduced rate of \$70/night at the Days Inn located on Munson Ave. The hotel is within walking distance from the workshop. To make room reservations, contact Days Inn toll free at (800) 982-3297, and indicate that you are participating in the GIS workshop. If you plan to attend the March 14 workshop, the reservation deadline for a hotel room is February 28, 2003. Room reservations for the May 16 workshop must be completed by May 2, 2003.

Register now by contacting the Michigan Society of Planning at (248) 553-7526, or visit our Website at www.planningmi.org. Class size is limited to 16 participants.

AICP Test Prep Offered

Look in the February issue of the Michigan Planner for details about the upcoming two-day AICP prep course

Planning Q&A

Comprehensive Plan: Is it Time to Update your plan?

Q ▶ Our comprehensive plan is 10 years old, are we required to prepare a new plan?

A ▶ The various Michigan planning acts do not require any municipality to have a comprehensive plan; they do require that existing plans be reviewed, but not necessarily changed, every five years. Age alone does not dictate the need for a new plan; a plan that continues to reflect the views and desires of the community remains a valid one. One way to determine if the plan remains relevant is to annually



review the goals of the plan and examine rezoning and other requests to ensure that the plan has been consistently followed.

Continued departures from the plan may be a clear indication of the need for an update.

Certainly as updated census, land use and other relevant information become available, it may be added to the plan.

Q ▶ How can we keep our plan current?

A ▶ Here are just a few actions that can be taken on an annual basis to make sure the plan remains relevant and vital.

- Periodically review the goals and objectives of the plan. Are they still relevant and worthy of achieving?



- Review rezoning applications processed during the year. Are there times when the plan was not followed? Did conditions change from the time the plan was adopted that warranted the departure(s) or are changes needed to address them?

- Have any major new developments been proposed or constructed, or significant infrastructure projects been completed either in the community or in adjacent communities that may cause some reconsideration for land use of surrounding properties?

- Have any other major studies or plans (corridor studies, water and sewer plans, etc.) been completed that might affect the plan?

The Q & A was contributed by Langworthy Strader LaBlanc & Associates, Inc.

If you have a question you would like to see published in a future issue, contact:

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WANTED

Request for Proposal

The Wyoming Downtown Development Authority seeks a qualified applicant to complete an MDOT funded study regarding its proposed Town Center design including brochures, perspectives, and an Urban Design Site Plan for the Town Center. Inquiries and requests for information regarding RFP must be submitted to the project manager: Gerald Mears, 1155 28th St. S.W., Wyoming, MI. 49058-0905; (616) 530-7214; planning@ci.wyoming.mi.us. Subsequent inquiries or requests for information must be in writing. Pre-proposal written questions due February 14, 2003, 10:00 a.m. Responses by February 21, 2003. Proposals due March 11, 2003.

Assistant Planner

DeWitt Charter Township - Assistant Planner. Starting Salary: up to \$36,558 plus full-benefit package. DeWitt Charter Township, a growth-oriented community in the Lansing metropolitan area, is seeking applicants for this position in its Planning Department. Duties will include zoning and development review; short- and long-range planning; and general administrative activities.

Position requires a bachelor's degree in urban planning, master's degree preferred. Previous public sector planning experience a plus. Computer experience (ArcView), spreadsheet, database, and graphic applications highly desirable.

Send cover letter and resume to Personnel Director, DeWitt Charter Township, 1401 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt, MI 48820. Deadline January 17, 2003. E.O.E.

The "Wanted" section of the Michigan Planner is a service for our members. Classified ads run for one month and may not exceed 100 words. Cost for ads is \$75; you will be invoiced. Minimum of 45 days lead time is required. For more information, contact Andrea Brown at the Michigan Society of Planning at (248) 553-7526 or via e-mail at abrown@planningmi.org.

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Calling Cards, a directory of firms offering professional services, appears in every issue of the Michigan Planner. Firms listed pay a fee for this service which helps defray the cost of publication. This does not constitute an endorsement of any firm by the Michigan Society of Planning.

Calendar of Events



February 4, 2003

MSP 2003 Legislative Assembly:
Everything Old is New Again

Lansing Center, Lansing

Register now for this unique opportunity to learn about the state budget reality; hear Governor Granholm's plan for her administration; and be introduced to the 54 new state representatives and 29 new senators.

March 14, 2003 and May 16, 2003

An Introduction to Geographic
Information Systems for
Community Planning Decisions

9:00 a.m. through 4:30 p.m.

Workshops held at the Information
Systems Training Room Land
Information Access Association, 324
Munson Avenue, Traverse City,
Michigan

March 29-April 2, 2003

American Planning Association's
National Planning Conference

Denver, Colorado

To propose a session, go to
www.planning.org.

Access Management: Reducing Traffic Congestion and Improving Traffic Safety Program

January 29, 2003 - Petoskey

January 30, 2003 - Cadillac

February 6, 2003 - Jackson

February 12, 2003 - Benton Harbor

February 13, 2003 - Grand Rapids

February 26, 2003 - Kalamazoo

March 12, 2003 - Monroe

March 13, 2003 - Flint

March 19, 2003 - Marquette

March 20, 2003 - Port Huron

Offered for the first time last winter,
this is one of the most requested
workshops the Society has launched.

October 15 - 18, 2003

Michigan Society of Planning
Annual Conference

Grand Traverse Resort

Watch the Michigan Planner for details!

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